

Message Text

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USDOC FOR BEWT

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EEWT, EAIR, ENRG, US, UR, CH
SUBJECT: SINGER DISCUSSING COMPENSATION ARRANGEMENT WITH
USSR, PLANNING SYMPOSIUM IN PRC

SUMMARY: SINGER OFFICIAL ROBBINS TOLD AMBASSADOR APRIL 5
THAT COMPANY IS CONSIDERING BUYING SOVIET PRODUCED SEWING
MACHINES FOR SALE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SINGER WOULD
PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY FOR PRODUCTION OF MORE SOPHISTICATED
MACHINE FOR SOVIET DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AND EXPORT TO CEMA
AREA. ALTERNATIVELY SINGER WOULD PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY FOR
ELECTRIC HAND-HELD POWER TOOLS. ROBBINS SAID HE WOULD BE
GOING TO CHINA THIS SUMMER FOR SYMPOSIUM ON SEWING
MACHINES AND GAS MEASUREMENT TECHNOLOGY. HEAD OF SINGER
AEROSPACE GROUP WOULD ACCOMPANY TO DISCUSS DOPPLER AND
INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEMS FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT, MICROWAVE
LANDING SYSTEMS AND SIMULATORS FOR PILOT TRAINING. ROBBINS
SAID SINGER HAS GIVEN UP IDEA OF SELLING GAS METERING
DEVICES TO USSR FOR METERING HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION OF GAS,
SINCE SOVIETS WOULD FIRST HAVE TO MAKE POLITICAL DECISION
TO INCREASE GAS PRICE BEFORE SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD BECOME
FEASIBLE. END SUMMARY.

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1. SINGER SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT DONALD ROBBINS INFORMED
AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD BEEN HAVING USEFUL MEETINGS WITH
SOVIET MINISTER FOR MACHINE BUILDING FOR LIGHT AND FOOD
INDUSTRY AND HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES I. I. PUDKOV. PREVIOUS
ATTEMPTS TO SELL SOVIETS TECHNOLOGY FOR BUILDING SEWING
MACHINES HAD FOUNDERED, BUT SINGER'S DECISION TO ACCEPT

AS COMPENSATION OLD-FASHIONED STANDARD MACHINE PRODUCED BY USSR (AND CHINA), ROBBINS EXPLAINED, HAD IMPROVED CHANCES FOR AN AGREEMENT. SINGER WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE 50-100,000 OF SUCH MACHINES ANNUALLY AT VALUE OF \$1-2 MILLION FOR EXTENDED PERIOD. MARKETING WOULD BE IN ASIA, AFRICA AND SOME PARTS OF LATIN AMERICA. (ROBBINS EARLIER TOLD E/C COUNSELOR THAT SINGER WOULD PREFER TO SELL SOVIET-MADE MACHINES UNDER SINGER TRADEMARK, AND THAT SPARE PARTS WOULD BE NO PROBLEM.) ROBBINS EXPLAINED THAT ONLY USSR AND CHINA PRODUCE OLD-FASHIONED STANDARD MODEL AND SAID HE HAD MENTIONED CHINA TO SOVIET DISCUSSANTS TO PUT THEM ON NOTICE THEY ARE NOT ONLY POTENTIAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY. HE WAS TAKING TWO SOVIET MACHINES HOME FOR SCRUTINY; IF THEY PASSED THE TEST, SINGER WOULD BE INTERESTED IN TAKING A SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF YEARS.

2. IN TURN, SINGER WOULD PROVIDE SOVIETS WITH TECHNOLOGY FOR PRODUCTION OF MORE SOPHISTICATED SEWING MACHINE TO BE BUILT AT PODOLSK AND MARKETING DOMESTICALLY AND IN EASTERN EUROPE. ALTERNATIVELY, IT WOULD SELL TECHNOLOGY FOR HAND-HELD ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS ALONG LINES MARKETING IN U.S. BY SEARS. ROBBINS SAID THAT MINISTER PUDKOV AND SIX MAN GROUP WOULD BE GOING LATER THIS MONTH TO U.S. TO SEE SINGER FACILITIES IN NEW JERSEY (SEWERS) AND SOUTH CAROLINA (POWER TOOLS) AND TO ATTEND A TEXTILE MACHINERY SHOW IN GREENVILLE, S.C.
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3. ROBBINS TOLD AMBASSADOR HE WOULD BE GOING TO CHINA THIS SUMMER TO HOLD SYMPOSIUM ON SEWING MACHINES AND GAS MEASUREMENT TECHNOLOGY. THE HEAD OF SINGER AEROSPACE GROUP WOULD BE GOING, TOO, AND SINGER WOULD PROPOSE SALE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR DOPPLER AND INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEMS FOR CIVIL AIRCRAFT. HE EXPLAINED THESE WERE FAR LESS SOPHISTICATED THAN EQUIPMENT USED ON F-16 AIRCRAFT OR HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS. TECHNOLOGY FOR MICROWAVE LANDING SYSTEM, WHICH ROBBINS DESCRIBED AS SIMPLE AND NOT SAME SYSTEM AS SELECTED BY FAA, WOULD ALSO BE OFFERED. WHEN AMBASSADOR INQUIRED IF THIS TECHNOLOGY WERE LICENSABLE, ROBBINS ASSURED HIM THAT IT WAS. MOREOVER, SINGER WOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSING TECHNOLOGY OF SIMULATOR FOR TRAINING OF PILOTS SUCH AS THAT USED ON BOEING AIRCRAFT. HE NOTED THAT CHINA HAS SOME BOEING 707'S AND IS CONSIDERING ACQUISITION OF BOEING 727'S.

4. ROBBINS SAID HE IS ALSO SEEKING ON PRESENT TRIP TO SELL SEWING MACHINES TO DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND TO VNESHPRO-SYLTORG FOR PLACEMENT IN SOVIET HARD CURRENCY STORES, WHERE HE ASSUMED SOME WOULD BE ACQUIRED BY SOVIET VIP'S.

5. NOTING THAT SINGER AGREEMENT WITH SCST EXPIRES IN SEPTEMBER, ROBBINS SAID THAT HE WANTED TO DISCUSS CHANGE IN ITEMS COVERED. SINGER WAS NO LONGER IN DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT BUSINESS, ON THE ONE HAND, BUT IT WISHED TO SEE HAND POWER TOOLS INCLUDED, ON THE OTHER. SCST ALSO APPEARED INTERESTED IN A SYMPOSIUM ON WOODEN FURNITURE OF MIDDLE RANGE QUALITY AND PRICE. THE SOVIETS WERE INTERESTED IN THE TECHNOLOGY FOR PRINTING WHICH GAVE VENEER THE APPEARANCE OF REAL WOOD.

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6. ASKED ABOUT EARLIER SINGER INTEREST IN SELLING METERS FOR HOUSEHOLD GAS CONSUMPTION, ROBBINS SAID THAT SOVIETS ARE NOT YET PREPARED TO FACE POLITICAL QUESTION OF INSTALLING METERS. THE PRICE WOULD HAVE TO GO UP (COMMENT: SUBSTANTIALLY), HE SAID, TO JUSTIFY PUTTING IN METERS.

7. ROBBINS ALSO CONFIDED THAT SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATION TECHPROIMPORT HAD INFORMED HIM OF A CASE WHERE SINGER HAD FALLEN DOWN ON COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE INDUSTRIAL SEWING MACHINES A FEW YEARS AGO. HE THOUGHT THERE MIGHT AGAIN BE SOME PROSPECTS IN THIS AREA AS WELL.

8. COMMENT: PRICE TAG OF \$6 TO \$8 MILLION WHICH ROBBINS PUT ON SINGER SALE REPRESENTS A CONSIDERABLE SCALING DOWN OF \$50 TO \$60 MILLION PRICE HE WAS DISCUSSING IN PAST YEARS. IDEA OF CONSTRUCTING TURNKEY PLANT HAS APPARENTLY BEEN DROPPED, AND SINGER WOULD SIMPLY ASSIST SOVIETS IN BUILDING NEW FACILITY ALONGSIDE PRESENT ONE IN PODOLSK.

AS FOR QUALITY OF MORE SIMPLE SOVIET MODEL WHICH SINGER
WOULD BE TAKING AS BARTER, ROBBINS SAID THAT IT WAS ADEQU-
ATE FOR THE INTENDED PURPOSE. TOON
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Message Attributes

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